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### Author

Gaetos, Michael Bryann

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Examining the Limits of Filipinx Enrollment in Selective Postsecondary Public  
Institutions Within the U.S.: A study on the University of California, Berkeley

*Michael Bryann Gaetos*

**Abstract**

California's Filipinx population is one of its largest Asian American subgroups with an extensive history of socioeconomic accounts, although higher education in the state has shown a drastic lack of underrepresentation for Filipinx and Filipinx Americans. This study focuses on the University of California, Berkeley, a selective public institution, and the disparities in effectively reaching parity within admissions applications and enrollment rates among California's significant Filipinx population. According to 2019 data published by the University of California InfoCenter, more than 87,000 high school students applied to Berkeley with a 16% admit rate. Filipinx/Filipinx Americans accounted for only 3,468 (3.9%) of Berkeley's applications with only 489 (14%) admitted. When we keep in mind that Filipinx identify as the largest Asian American subgroup of California, we see a huge discrepancy in numbers. In this paper, I utilize a variety of different resources that encapsulate the greater challenges of Filipinx students within both K-12 and higher education to pinpoint the institutional cause of low enrollment. This includes the disproportionate representation of Filipinx faculty, the racialization of Filipinx as a model minority, and the distinct educational values instilled in Filipinx culture. My data collection further consists of interviews among UC Berkeley undergraduate students, alumni, and faculty. Conversations were emphasized to highlight the socioeconomic elements they believed to be a contributing cause, what short-term and long-term effects culminated from

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the rate of Filipinx admission at Berkeley, and their impression on current California educational policies such as Proposition 209 and Proposition 16.

## INTRODUCTION

Undeniably one of the largest Asian American communities in the United States, Filipinx<sup>1</sup> and Filipinx Americans<sup>2</sup> create a vast array of folks who stretch generations of history and culture alongside them. Although spread across the entire United States with notable concentrations in Hawai'i and more compact communities settled throughout the East Coast, Filipinxs dominate in the state of California. According to the United States Census Bureau through the 2018 American Community Survey, the more than 1.6 million Filipinxs living in California make them the largest Asian American subgroup in the state, and many can be found in densely populated areas like San Diego County, the Greater Los Angeles region, and the San Francisco Bay Area. There is no doubt that California's largest Asian American subgroup has been equipped with taking spaces in multiple institutions and that they have become a growing force for social and economic empowerment, although underrepresentation has always and still continues to be an ongoing challenge for this prominent group. For the purposes of this research, I delve deep into the significant underrepresentation of Filipinx students at the University of California, Berkeley--a selective public institution known globally for its reputation in promoting diversity and advancement in political activism. In spite of this well-perceived notion that the university has carved itself for decades, Berkeley has explicitly been an origin of continued suppression and exploitation at the expense of its greater Black, Indigenous, People of Color student community that is not limited to only the Filipinx population.

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<sup>1</sup> The use of "Filipinx" for "Filipino" throughout the course of my paper allows for the acknowledgement and inclusivity of those who do not identify along the traditional gender context.

<sup>2</sup> I use "Filipinx" and "Filipinx American" interchangeably throughout my paper while still acknowledging the differences in the Filipinx diaspora during certain portions of my research

Within the context of higher education admission and enrollment for my research, the Filipinx American community has had an extensive timeline of constant pushback in efforts of reaching parity at postsecondary academic institutions. There is much to dissect in regards to what socioeconomic and systematic factors contribute to the significant underrepresentation of Filipinx students at one of California's most selective academic institutions, and as a public entity primarily meant to prioritize its own residents, how the campus has fallen short in working towards fair representation for its largest Asian American subgroup. Starting in the 1980s and into the 1990s, when admissions policies that included race and gender were becoming a heated debate nationwide, Berkeley was one of the many higher education institutions in the United States that came under fire for attempting to utilize racial quotas and limiting enrollment based on ethnicity. (Takagi, 1993) Following years of heavy disputes, the debate for removing affirmative action policies in California became more prominent. Filipinx Americans were hit early in the process and were actually among the first ethnic groups to be removed from these policies. (Buenavista, 2010) As a result of the permanent end to race-based preferences in undergraduate admissions throughout the entire University of California system in 1998, UC Berkeley's admission rates for Filipinx students declined tremendously and to this day, parity has yet to be achieved to balance the growing number of Filipinos in California. As a response, initiatives to achieve greater representation have certainly been taken on by students and other organized groups, although there are still socioeconomic and systemic factors that remain to be discussed.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

During the course of gathering and analyzing academic articles that pertain to my research topic, I was prepared to be faced with a tight window of opportunity for any extensive

selection of research on the prospect of Filipinx involvement and engagement in U.S. higher education, given the limited attention for disaggregated research on the diverse Asian American community. However, the few articles that I have been able to gather are ones that have been so substantial in piecing together details relating to my topic. One notable scholar that has not only been distinguished in my search for any Filipinx research, but also someone who has been referenced repeatedly by many individuals I have interviewed over the course of producing this paper, is Tracy Lachica Buenavista. As an alumna of UC Berkeley and a former PASS (Filipinx Academic Student Services) intern and advisor in the late 1990s, Buenavista's work in the field of Filipinx American studies draws from her own personal experiences navigating UC Berkeley. Her work in *Issues Affecting U.S. Filipino Student Access to Postsecondary Education: A Critical Race Theory Perspective* primarily lays out three factors that form the discrepancies of the Filipinx community successfully attaining postsecondary opportunities: immigration, socioeconomic status, and race. Utilizing Critical Race Theory, Buenavista mentions that all three factors intersect to limit the ability for Filipinx Americans to properly achieve and retain themselves within academia. Without the proper step in acknowledging how intersectionality--a key component to Critical Race Theory--plays a role in this discourse, then we would fail to critically analyze the significant underrepresentation and misrepresentation of Filipinx in academia.

When it comes to highlighting how socioeconomic status plays a role in determining college access and retention, we understand that students who come from a more working class-background have a limited space of "freedom" in navigating education because of the scarcity of proper resources within their reach (i.e. resources at their high school, guidance from their familial educational background, and peer support). As a result of this, the educational

aspirations of these students are restricted and college choice becomes limited from the very beginning. Filipinx fit this notion very well, and although the socioeconomic backgrounds of Filipinx are diverse, Buenavista points to the 60% of Filipino families in the United States who actually work in low-wage jobs and service-sector workspaces. This sheds light against the model minority myth that many play upon Filipinx, given that we are racially categorized as Asian. The myth projects that Asians, as a supposed monolith, have been able to successfully navigate academia and society to portray a narrative that other historically excluded communities are able to succeed as well. Because of the model minority myth, many folks may point to the interesting and contentious statistic of the high percentage of Filipinx folks who hold a college degree (36.7%) when analyzing the rates of other Black, Indigenous, communities of color. With the understanding that a college degree is on par with upward mobility, the disconnect with collecting this statistic is *where* these degrees were actually awarded. A vast majority of these Filipinx who hold a college degree are actually first-generation immigrants from the Philippines, having come from Philippine institutions that do not hold the same weight as a U.S. college degree for purposes of measuring occupation and socioeconomic placement. In relevance to my research of how UC Berkeley as an institution fails to garner a larger audience of Filipinx students, Buenavista also highlights the work of Asian American scholar Robert Teranishi who, with his colleagues, examined how Filipinos consider a wide range of postsecondary institutions, but are “more likely to attend less selective institutions: two-year community colleges and proprietary schools.” (Buenavista, 2010) I see this as a direct result from a multitude of factors, but primarily from the reason that a majority of Filipinx are simply not as equipped with the fitting resources and knowledge to the exposure of UC Berkeley as a more distinguished and selective university.

A second piece of literature that I have focused close attention to is one that also touches upon the representation of Filipinx as part of a greater aggregated Asian American community. The work highlights the multiple disparities in holding this classification if the very distinct challenges that Filipinx and Filipinx Americans face as one of the largest diaspora populations in the United States are not taken into account. Titled *Engaging Filipinx Americans in Higher Education to Foster Student Success*, scholars Ernest “Niki” Libarios, Jr., Melissa Arriba, Chris M. Lucas, Kawehionalani Goto, and Roderick N. Labrador all delve into the several factors that affect Filipinx academic attainment, which are: the model minority myth, marginalization, invisibility and isolation, ethnic and racial identity, family and parental influence, financial hardships, and immigration and language barriers--many of which can be cited with Tracy Buenavista’s articles as well. In helping to address my research without disregarding other factors (by recognizing the intersections of each factor), I insisted on a deeper analysis of invisibility and isolation. In the context of invisibility, the article notes just how momentous Filipinos are with regards to a fastly growing population, yet it is a population that is one of the least understood and least researched ethnic minority groups in the country. (Maramba, 2003; Museus & Maramba, 2011, as cited in Libarios, et al., 2018) Invisibility also equates to the severe lack of representation in academic research and physical setting at an institution. Within both secondary and postsecondary education, the absence of [both literal and scholarly] Filipinx representation permeates into a lost cultural connection for Filipinx youth.

With all the articles I have reviewed, each one has echoed identical socioeconomic and historical elements that bestow on the inconsistencies in supporting Filipinx students within higher education institutions. Many, if not all of the factors analyzed, contribute to the University of California, Berkeley’s inadequacy as a center of learning to holistically support Filipinx and

Filipinx Americans as a historically excluded, racialized, and marginalized community on its own campus. Alongside my decision to also conduct interviews and draw statistics from multiple databases, the literature reviews have reaffirmed my ability to examine the limits of Filipinx presence.

## METHODOLOGY

My data collection method was solely through conducting multiple interviews over the course of several days. While I had initially constructed a survey meant to be distributed to anyone who identifies as Filipinx/Filipinx American across the state willing to share their journey navigating higher education in high school and/or community college, I ultimately made the choice to remove the survey as a data collection method for my research project. Although I could have found the data from surveying useful, I made the decision to wholly focus on interviews with a more intimate audience while still encompassing the same information I had hoped to gather via a survey.

A majority of the interview questions I asked were open-ended and revolved around participants hoping to share their personal experiences when they applied into higher education. Specifically how they navigated the college application process, if they received guidance from counselors, and what the demographic make-up was of their respective high school and/or community college. Other open-ended questions included directly asking for their input on what socioeconomic factors they personally believe impact the rate of Filipinx admissions at UC Berkeley; what potential short-term and long-term effects there are with the lack of Filipinx students at UC Berkeley; their thoughts on certain California policies such as Proposition 209 and Proposition 16; and any ample opinions they have on the effectiveness of student-initiated efforts at UC Berkeley like the *bridges* Multicultural Resource Center and PASS (Pilipinx



Academic Student Services). I additionally asked if they would be comfortable sharing the location of the high school and/or community college they attended and whether or not they were involved with a greater Filipinx community on their campus, both in terms of peers and faculty. A follow-up question was then asked that if there was indeed a prominent Filipinx community, what pathway after high school did a majority of Filipinx students take. The complete list of questions I asked my interviewees are pasted in the Appendix.

In response to my intentions for wanting to delve into this particular topic issue, I wanted to ensure that my interests in my identity as Filipinx and my passions in educational access and equity would be guiding principles throughout this project. I further wanted to pursue a relevant issue that I felt confident I would be able to continue pursuing far past my time as an undergraduate student, and one that I hope to refer back to in any new conversations I would be exposed to that touches upon accountability for postsecondary institutions. Circling back to my identity as a young Filipinx in the midst of nearly completing my time as an undergraduate student, I also refer back to my upbringing as someone who was born in the Philippines and came to the United States at a young age with very little, although my parents made a point when they ultimately chose Vallejo, a city 35 minutes north of Berkeley notable for having one of the largest concentrations of Filipinx and Filipinx Americans in the entire country and a place I would soon come to realize as my hometown.

Subsequently, my experience with navigating the higher education system these past few years has also been a prominent cause for pursuing my topic. As someone who attended community college and was heavily involved in student spaces alongside two jobs specifically geared towards higher education access like the Career & Transfer Services Center and the EOPS Office, these spaces unquestionably allowed me to gain knowledge of how these resources

have a tremendous impact in student success, especially for students from marginalized backgrounds. Now at UC Berkeley, I have proceeded to serve in almost similar positions as I did during my time in community college. I currently work as a Student Advisor with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions and I serve as the Recruitment Director for Filipinx Academic Student Services (PASS), a student-sponsored recruitment and retention center. My future aspirations come with applying to an M.Ed. (master in education) program in the very near future with a concentration in higher education and student affairs, and although I intend on striving towards a more practitioner-based curriculum, I am aware of the necessities in conducting and exposing myself to empirical research to best approach the discourse of educational equity among underrepresented communities.

#### DATA COLLECTION & FINDINGS

According to data published by the University of California Infocenter, a total of 87,398 high school seniors applied to UC Berkeley in the fall 2019 term with a 16% admit rate. This places Berkeley as an extremely selective campus and the fifth most applied to university in the country according to the U.S. News & World Report. 44,486 of these applications were categorized as coming from students of Asian descent, the largest of any racial group and one that comprises literally more than half of all total applications at 51%. To disaggregate the data even further for Berkeley's number of applicants and admissions rates, particularly in the context of Filipinx/Filipinx Americans, they accounted for only 3,468 (3.9%) of all applications with 14%, or 489 Filipinx students, being admitted. When we keep in mind that Filipinxs identify as the largest Asian American subgroup of California, we see a huge discrepancy in the numbers. Chinese applicants, who make up the second largest Asian American subgroup in California,

account for over 19,400 applications, and Asian Indians as the fourth largest subgroup reaching almost 9,000 applications.

Over the span of one week, I scheduled and conducted a total of nine [virtual] interviews with an assortment of individuals who hold distinct identities, backgrounds, and educational journeys that pertain to supporting my research topic. Of the nine individuals contacted, all identify as Filipinx/Filipinx American and were chosen on the basis that I have (1) previously engaged in very fruitful conversations with them that centered around the small-scale presence of Filipinx enrollment at UC Berkeley, or (2) known them to be formerly or currently involved in spaces and positions that directly cater towards the recruitment of Filipinx/Filipinx American/Asian American youth into higher education, or (3) a combination of both 1 and 2. I additionally chose to analyze a set of individuals who have or are currently attending UC Berkeley as a student, with four who are currently undergraduate students and five alumni. Interviewees encapsulated a representation of both gender conforming and non-gender conforming backgrounds, with five who are male-identifying, three who are female-identifying, and one who is non-gender conforming. In addition to the several profiles of those that I interviewed, I prioritized reaching out to a set of folks who all come from different areas of California, including the greater Los Angeles region, the San Francisco Bay Area, and the Sacramento capitol region.

As for the five alumni, two of them are currently full-time faculty at UC Berkeley (specifically with the Office of Undergraduate Admissions), three are pursuing graduate programs in education, and two are currently working with non-profit organizations that offer support services to students for academic success. Notably, one alumni currently sits on the Asian American and Pacific Islander Standing Committee (AAPISC) The four undergraduate

students that I interviewed are all currently in their second or third year at UC Berkeley and are pursuing different fields of study, including data science, education, media studies, political science, and social welfare. The commonality between all my participants, whether an alumni or an undergraduate student, is their involvement with the greater Filipinx community and/or one of the eight respective Filipinx registered student organizations at UC Berkeley. Each interviewee has also been associated with PASS (Pilipinx Academic Student Services) and/or the greater *bridges* Multicultural Resource Center either through directly holding a year-long staff position, as an intern, or as a general volunteer for one or multiple events. This was something I took into account knowing that their experiences with the *bridges* Multicultural Resource Center and/or PASS reveals their familiarity with Filipinx recruitment and outreach efforts particularly for this institution.

During the course of conducting my nine interviews, there were several reverberating sentiments that were brought up when it came to the discussion of what socioeconomic factors contribute to the low rate of Filipinx students at UC Berkeley and the premises of enrolling at an institution with such a small Filipinx population. Briefly and generally speaking, these factors are: the perception of Berkeley as a challenging and unattainable campus, especially for underrepresented minorities; the values that are ingrained in Filipinx lifestyle and culture; the dangerous racialization of Filipinx in academic discourse; the disproportionate representation of Filipinx in both faculty and social spheres; and the absence of policies that aim to help marginalized communities into institutions like Berkeley along race and ethnic identity. While I find these all convincing and supported by both personal testimony and published research, I decided to closely examine three to better consolidate the margins of this project:

- 1. A disproportionate representation of a Filipinx identity in faculty and social spheres**
- 2. The racialization of Filipinxs as a model minority**
- 3. The distinct educational values and desirabilities within Filipinx culture**

It is crucial to understand that all these elements are heavily intersectional and I feel that there is not necessarily one that weighs more than the other. Instead, based entirely on the testimonials of my interviews and the literature views collected, I found the three listed above to be more demonstrative.

The disproportionate representation of a Filipinx identity in faculty and social spheres is consequential when hoping to dissect the question as to why there is the slightest presence of Filipinx students at Berkeley. It is clear that educational attainment among Filipinx students is reinforced by the role of school personnel and the connection that students have with their teachers and counselors. (Pasamonte, 2015) This is no different in the same context that Filipinx college students are best supported by the presence of those who share the same cultural and historical background as they do. Unfortunately, the amount of Filipinx-identifying faculty and staff at Berkeley is extremely minimal, alongside the ongoing challenges for more tenured faculty and more space on the course catalog for Philippine studies, Filipinx American studies, and Filipinx language studies. Among the very few tenured faculty who come from a Filipinx background within Berkeley's 130+ academic departments are Catherine Ceniza Choy, a professor of Ethnic Studies and chair of the Ethnic Studies Department, Lisandro Claudio, an assistant professor with the South and Southeast Asian Department, and Abigail De Kosnik, an associate professor with the Theater, Dance, and Performance Studies Department who is also the Director of the Berkeley Center for New Media. Non-tenured Filipinx lecturers Joi Barrios-LeBlanc, Cynthia "Chat" Aban, and Karen Llagas of the growing Filipinx language courses have

also increased visibility over the years, although funding and participation among the greater student population continue to persist as a challenge. Participant Joyce Talavera profoundly mentioned the recent challenges of the institution failing to support a Philippine Studies program and the consequences of how this comes across as a hostile administration that completely disregards any sense of priority for an already underrepresented community on its own campus. Another participant that I interviewed, Keziah Aurin, emphasized the ability and opportunity for professors to cultivate a more inclusive environment for their own community. Ultimately, the “lack of ethnic and racial diversity on campuses and the lack of university recognition for their position as students of color who are in need of academic support create a perception of a negative racial climate for Filipinos.” (Buenavista, et al., 2009)

Pinpointing the racialization of Filipinx is also another significant factor that has been echoed by a multitude of my interviewees and one that is strikingly brought up over and over again in many published articles. Racialization feeds into the model minority myth that Filipinx share the exact same social structures and institutional opportunities as our East Asian counterparts, who are primarily the ones with higher educational attainment rates and are arguably the group to overrepresent the Asian/Asian American identity in education and in this case, a selective institution like UC Berkeley. The concept of the myth does not take into account the ethnic and socioeconomic diversity of Asian Americans, and ultimately serves to maintain the dominance of whiteness, or an anti-Black curriculum. (Buenavista, et al., 2009) Participant Raquel Calara shared her sentiments on the basis of a destructive process of racialization,

Chinese, Japanese, Korean Americans are what you think of when you see the term AAPI or Asian American Pacific Islander. What is being overrepresented are these three groups. They are seen as “academically successful,” but these three main groups

overshadow other subgroups, resulting in a misperception that all AAPI are similar and should be studied as an aggregate group. Filipinos continue to be a distinct minority in higher education, research, and literature. If you lump Filipino Americans into the category Asian American or AAPI, it overshadows the experiences we've been through and the difficulties we struggled with and will never be addressed. In reality, it's a totally different story and there won't be a total sense of urgency with the challenges we go through.

The failures in disaggregating not only the data, but also the narratives of each distinct ethnic group has proven to directly ignore that Filipinx students do not have the same access to educational resources or support services from the very beginning. When leaving out the greater history of the Philippine diaspora that lead to our distinct socioeconomic backgrounds as Filipinx Americans in this country and why our journey into higher education is so separate from other Asian American subgroups, it falls short of a more holistic approach that is usually best done through Critical Race Theory. Participant Djenilin Mallari also brought up an interesting case of racialization among Filipinxs through the way that the University of California system sees underrepresented minorities (UREM) when analyzing data and admissions rates. UREM is categorized with Black, Chicanx/Latinx, and indigenous groups, although it leaves out Filipinxs and other Southeast Asian and Pacific Islander groups that we are well aware of as underrepresented communities. This further lifts the harmful narrative of Filipinxs, Southeast Asians, and Pacific Islanders as part of a greater model minority in education under the AAPI umbrella.

The third and final premise that answers my research topic is the distinct educational values and desirability found in Filipinx culture. As a diaspora that has been centered around

prioritizing a collective identity, many Filipinxs feel the obligation to support their family and what the effects are with the choices they make within education, which was highlighted by participant Alejandro Felipe Manuel Gatus. For Filipinxs, this is observed in two ways: the location of higher education institutions and the occupational pathways that institutions provide, which go hand-in-hand with each other. The proximity of Berkeley as both a campus and a city nestled in the Bay Area comes with the question of how feasible living situations really are for Filipinx students and their families as we take into account what was previously mentioned about the majority of families working in low-wage and service-sector jobs. The second observation of occupational pathways that institutions provide is a more distinguishable value adamantly reflected on the narratives of Filipinx and Filipinx Americans. UC Berkeley itself is known for the greater means of organizing and showcasing research by its faculty and students. Participant Djenilin Mallari further weighs in when talking about the connection between a UC [Berkeley] education and the certain educational desirability of Filipinx families:

A UC education is so abstract that, sometimes when we're explaining the comparison of a UC to a CSU, where a CSU education is practical and you learn to build something. At Berkeley, it's far more abstract and not easily definable. That lends itself well to the challenge of cultural factors. Reflecting on my own experiences, when I pursued social welfare, if it didn't have something like a lawyer or doctor or nurse attached to it, my parents would ask what I would be doing with it. That impacts our self talk as folks applying to school, but also folks who want to believe in themselves but don't have the support externally.

It is critical to understand that the greater Filipinx community as a collective has never seen research as a primary line of employment and career aspiration, and arguably, vocational and



trade school has always been at the center of educational desirability for Filipinx families. They have always been “advanced as critical workers in the United States especially for their mass labor” (Buena Vista, 2010) and our patterns of both colonization and immigration encapsulate that. For example, the history behind the excess of Filipinx nurses coming to the United States throughout the later half of the 20th century is still felt to this day and has seeped into the educational values of today’s Filipinx youth because of their parents.

### ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

While I have managed to take in a plethora of different perspectives from both the content of my interviews and the research of many articles, there were definitely certain aspects that were more supported to answer my original research question of what socioeconomic factors are present for Filipinx communities in the pursuance of higher education, particularly at the University of California, Berkeley. After solidifying my research, none of my findings really came as a surprise to me, rather the information I was able to gather has given me a more explicit and detailed level of understanding moving forward. I felt that my passions really guided me to finish strong with conducting this research, and if anything, this project has enabled me to become much more appreciative of the research that Filipinx scholars have done to disrupt that challenging sequence of bringing more Filipinx-centered issues into academia.

Some of the problems that arose over the course of my research was definitely the process of finding disaggregated data of Filipinxs. I was relieved to find that the University of California Infocenter provides a complete breakdown of UC Berkeley’s and the rest of the UC campuses admission and enrollment statistics on the basis of ethnic subgroups, which is data I consider crucial to be aware of for the purposes of my research. Additionally, when I first began attempting to gather literature pieces, I had a challenging time finding work and scholars that

focused more on the entry of Filipinx students into higher education while there seems to be a richer quantity of articles that examine the retention efforts of sustaining Filipinx students in education. I ultimately realized that these two are in close association with each other and cannot be analyzed without also exploring the details of the other. Just as how the work of a recruitment & retention center is interdependent with one recruitment and retention, so is the research in asking what contributes to low representation of Filipinx students at a postsecondary institution. Lastly, a challenge that repeatedly came up during the course of my interview was establishing the limits of my paper. The more information I gathered and the more articles I was able to find, the deeper I wanted to dig in the area of higher education access. There were definitely things that I felt would have been crucial to the formation of my explorations, including the implications of being an undocumented Filipinx in the United States, given that they are the largest undocumented Asian American community in the country.

## CONCLUSION

Simply offering a list of general factors that one may infer as to why there is such a sparse representation of Filipinx students at UC Berkeley is not enough, and does not justify the true implications of the lack of Filipinx students at this institution. Like many other historically excluded and marginalized communities in this country, the unique diaspora that encompasses the Filipinx/Filipinx American identity must be analyzed to achieve a better comprehension of answering why there is such a lack of Filipinx students in the first place. While I know that these factors will continue to be present because of the institutional basis at which they sit on, I am also hopeful that the continued efforts of Filipinx scholars across the country will maintain the necessary discourse for the future generation of new Filipinx scholars and fighters. The disproportionate representation in faculty and social spheres, the racialization of Filipinx as a

model minority, and the distinct educational values and desirability within Filipinx culture seem to have dominated as themes during the course of my research, as outlined above. These three main elements I covered, alongside the greater list of factors that contribute to such a sparse representation of Filipinx students at Berkeley, are ones that are both external and internal at the hands of the institution. Should I have the opportunity to conduct this research all over again, or even further it, one thing I would definitely want to add onto my data collection method is personally reaching out to the handful of Filipinx scholars that I have analyzed, and provide them the opportunity to share their testimonials at the introduction of my topic issue. Regardless, I end my research with the greater realization that the Filipinx community in the United States will continue to grow and the fight for a more equitable education will continue to drastically shape the narrative of the Filipinx community, with hopefully myself being part of that process in the near future as a practitioner in academia.

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## **APPENDIX**

### Interview Questions:

1. Please feel free to begin by introducing yourself, your pronouns, what you are currently studying or where you went for your undergraduate education, and if you would be willing to share your experiences navigating the application process as a senior in high school. Feel free to also mention the positions and student organizations you have been part of as well as any professional settings you are currently involved in.
2. Can you share your secondary education experience and if you took advantage of any educational resources that your school possibly offered?
3. What was the demographic make-up of your high school and/or community college?
4. What socioeconomic factors do you think impact the scarce amount of applications of Filipinx students in California who apply to UC Berkeley?
5. Is there something particular about UC Berkeley and its campus and its environment that contribute to such a low rate of Filipinx students at this campus?
  - a. Comparable to that of other UC campuses?
  - b. Providing context of the percentage of Filipinx students at each UC campus

*Filipinx students at each UC campus proportionate to student population, fall 2019*

<u>Campus</u>	<u>Undergrad</u>	<u>Undergrad + Graduate</u>	<u>Freshman Filipinx admit rate</u>
Berkeley	3.9%	3.2%	14%
Davis	5.5%	4.9%	36%
Irvine	7.0%	6.2%	25%
Los Angeles	4.5%	3.8%	9.4%
Merced	5.0%	4.8%	20%

Riverside	6.3%	5.7%	80%
San Diego	6.0%	5.2%	28%
Santa Barbara	3.8%	3.5%	25%
Santa Cruz	5.2%	4.9%	50%

6. What do you think would help contribute to an increase of Filipinx students at UC Berkeley?
7. What are the potential short-term, and even long-term, impacts of the lack of Filipinx students at UC Berkeley?
8. Do you think there is some sort of interrelation between the amount of Filipinx undergraduate students at Berkeley and the disproportional percentage of Filipinx-identifying faculty?
  - a. Why do you think that?
9. With the position you hold in your respective student organization(s) and/or professional space(s), do you feel like you serve as a “champion” for Filipinx students?
  - a. Touch upon white savior complex
10. What are your thoughts on Prop 16? Do you think it would have been a good step toward increasing the enrollment of Filipinx students at UC Berkeley?
11. Do you feel that grouping Filipinx into the racial category of Asian makes stakes for students more challenging for them to succeed in prestigious institutions?

12. How effective do you think student-initiated efforts at UC Berkeley, such as the *bridges* Multicultural Center (particularly PASS-Pilipinx Academic Student Services) has in efforts of hoping to reach parity for Filipinx students?
13. What do you feel the benefits are in increasing Filipinx enrollment at this campus?
  - a. Has this ever been addressed by your friends, peers, or higher-ups, and have you been involved in any sort of discussion?